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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre promoted the universalization and implementation of multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments, providing capacity-building programmes for Member States in the Asia-Pacific region upon their request. In the framework of the preparation for the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Centre organized regional seminars and practical training sessions aimed at strengthening reporting to the Programme of Action, identifying new approaches to address challenges caused by illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, other conventional arms and their ammunition, and enabling States to address these challenges. The Centre also conducted several regional workshops and national inter-agency meetings to enhance the capacity of Member States to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), including in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Regional Centre continued to promote dialogue and confidence-building in the region and beyond by organizing the sixteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, and the twenty-seventh United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Hiroshima, Japan. The conferences served as important forums to address key challenges posed to the international disarmament, non-proliferation and security regimes regarding weapons of mass destruction. Participants focused on prospects and ways ahead towards a world free of nuclear

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weapons, including on reaching a better understanding of the mutual complementarity and reinforcing nature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; on strengthening the physical security of stockpiles and the control and verification of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and technologies that could be used to manufacture weapons of mass destruction; and on cybersecurity and other technological advances and the challenges they pose to peace and security.

The Regional Centre depends solely on voluntary financial contributions to implement its programme activities. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to Member States, in particular the host country, Nepal, and other partners that have provided support for the Centre's operations and programmes with financial and in-kind assistance. He calls upon countries in the region and beyond to make voluntary contributions to the Centre to ensure the sustainability of its activities and operations and to enable it to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/39 D, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by Member States in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament through the appropriate utilization of available resources.

2. In its resolution 72/62, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction at the activities carried out in the past year by the Regional Centre and reaffirmed its strong support for the role of the Centre in the promotion of activities of the United Nations at the regional level to strengthen peace, stability and security among the Member States in Asia and the Pacific. It also expressed its gratitude to the Government of the host country, Nepal, for its cooperation and financial support. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventy-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned request and covers the activities of the Regional Centre during the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. A financial statement on the status of the trust fund for the Regional Centre for the second year of the biennium 2016–2017 is contained in the annex to the present report.

II. Activities of the Regional Centre

4. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre focused its programmatic activities on the following areas: promoting the implementation of global disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments, including by providing capacity-building and technical and legal assistance to Member States in the region, upon their request; enhancing dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security; and undertaking outreach and advocacy initiatives.

A. Promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

5. The Regional Centre continued implementing activities, in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the group of experts appointed to assist the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for the joint project in support of regional implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In advancing the aims of the project in Central Asia and Mongolia, efforts focused on developing and implementing national action plans, enhancing States' reporting to the Committee, broadening collaboration among international and regional actors and sharing effective national practices. Activities included: (a) facilitating country-specific dialogues to assess the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and assisting in developing national implementation action plans; (b) reviewing and evaluating progress in executing national action plans; and (c) organizing peer-review meetings to share experiences and effective practices among States on the implementation of the resolution.

6. In the framework of the joint project, the Regional Centre organized three national inter-agency round-table meetings to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The meetings were held in Tajikistan in June 2017 and in

Turkmenistan in June 2017 and January 2018. The meetings brought together officials of relevant State agencies of the respective Governments to review the progress achieved and outline a road map to further update and develop national action plans. Measures proposed at the meetings included the enhancement of national legislation, the adoption of national control lists, the strengthening and enforcement of domestic control mechanisms and the provision of training and educational activities related to ensuring the safety and security of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials.

7. As a follow-up to the national round-table meetings, the Regional Centre organized two expert review events in Vienna in September 2017 for Mongolia and Tajikistan in order to assess the progress made by the two countries in developing and implementing their national action plans. At those events, Tajikistan reported on the status of its national action plan and Mongolia presented the first draft of its plan. Their representatives held discussions with international experts and received recommendations from them on effective international practices, as well as challenges and lessons learned relating to the implementation of their plans. The status of the Mongolian and Tajik national action plans was also reported at the plenary meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation.

8. Within the framework of the joint project, a peer review on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was held in Dushanbe in August 2017, with the participation of national experts from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The three-day meeting served as a follow-up to the previous round of the peer review held in Belarus in 2016. Participating experts from the Member States discussed and exchanged national experiences and approaches to implementing the operative paragraphs of the resolution by taking into account recommendations agreed upon during their previous peer-review meeting, including on policymaking, the development of legislative frameworks, enforcement procedures and effective practices, as set out in the respective national action plans of the three States. They paid special attention to export-control legislation and border controls, with a specific focus on biological and chemical security. Representatives of the group of experts appointed to assist the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Regional Centre and the OSCE secretariat shared practical recommendations regarding legislative and technical elements of resolution 1540 (2004) focused on supporting the national action plans of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

9. The Regional Centre completed the project in January 2018, accomplishing its goal of strengthening national implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and promoting regional cooperation among States in the region, on the basis of knowledge- and experience-sharing, and with the support of experts from the Committee and other international organizations. Tajikistan developed its national action plan and submitted it to the Committee. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan updated their national action plans and also submitted them to the Committee. Mongolia and Turkmenistan made substantial progress in developing their national action plans.

10. In September 2017 the Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Thailand, organized a subregional workshop in Bangkok on global challenges and regional efforts concerning the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in South-East Asia. Almost 50 national officials engaged in discussions on the progress and challenges relating to the implementation of the resolution, both among themselves and with international experts from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Committee, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute. The participants focused on synergies from implementing the resolution, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention) and the Convention on the

Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention). They discussed issues regarding the safety and security of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials, export and border controls, as well as the protection and transfer of intangible technologies. United Nations experts highlighted the objectives, recommendations and effective practices for developing national action plans to implement the resolution and presented a case study of the successful implementation of the project in support of regional implementation of the resolution in Central Asia and Mongolia. The workshop was funded by the Governments of Australia and Austria.

11. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Committee, organized and held a national round-table meeting in Timor-Leste in October 2017 to strengthen the country's capacity to implement resolution 1540 (2004). The meeting was aimed at raising awareness among national officials of the relevance of the resolution and the provisions and obligations set out therein, and specifically at assisting Timor-Leste in preparing its first national report on the steps it had taken, or intended to take, in this regard, as called for by the Security Council. The meeting resulted in Timor-Leste submitting its first national report to the Committee. The event was funded by the Government of Japan.

Small arms and light weapons

12. In order to build the capacity of Central Asian States to implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Regional Centre organized a training session hosted by the Government of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar in August 2017. Participants from States of the region presented and discussed practical issues with regard to the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national level and the utilization of the International Small Arms Control Standards. In their presentations, the representatives of the Centre and of the Office for Disarmament Affairs paid special attention to the synergies between implementing the Programme of Action and reporting thereon in the context of its framework, on the one hand, and monitoring progress towards targets 16.1 and 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on the other. A representative of the OSCE secretariat presented an online reporting tool developed in cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs that was aimed at harmonizing reporting on regional and global mechanisms and reducing the reporting burden for Member States that are also participating OSCE participating States. Two practical exercises, on designing a national action plan and on preparing online national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, constituted the central part of the event and served to build the capacity of national representatives in the use of the International Small Arms Control Standards assessment tool and the preparation of the report. The project was funded by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation.

13. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Cambodia, organized a regional seminar in Phnom Penh in December 2017 for member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)and Timor-Leste on illicit trafficking and the diversion of small arms and light weapons, conventiona! arms and ammunition. The seminar was organized in response to requests by South-East Asian States and was aimed at facilitating regional dialogue to identify the main trends, sources and challenges related to increasing flows of illicit arms and ammunition in the region; and at strengthening subregional cooperation and coordination in preventing arms diversion and trafficking. Representatives of national ministries and law-enforcement agencies, the ASEAN Association of Chiefs of Police and non-governmental organizations emphasized the need to consolidate efforts to

effectively address the challenges posed by illicit arms. In particular, efforts included closer cooperation with such international law-enforcement agencies as the World Customs Organization and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and a regional action plan to prevent arms diversion and to tackle illicit arms trafficking. The project was funded by the Government of Germany.

14. In the framework of the preparation for the third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, organized a subregional meeting of Asian States in Bangkok on 7 and 8 March 2018. Representatives of Governments, the ASEAN Association of Chiefs of Police and the Small Arms Survey took part in a discussion on the current national and regional status of the implementation of the Programme of Action and its corresponding challenges, as well as the outcomes of four preceding thematic symposiums. Attention was primarily given to the issues of: (a) the interrelationship between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and gender aspects of small arms control; (b) developments in small arms manufacturing technology and design, and the resulting challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument; (c) small arms tracing and stockpile management; and (d) synergy between the Programme of Action, the Arms Trade Treaty and other relevant agreements. The project was funded by the European Union.

B. Promoting dialogue and confidence in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and security

15. The Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea, organized two annual international conferences on disarmament, non-proliferation and security issues. The conferences served as important forums for engaging Member States, intergovernmental organizations, academia, civil society and other stakeholders in informal and frank discussions on key challenges in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, thereby contributing to security, confidence-building and efforts to seek solutions to complex issues in such matters, both globally and in the Asia-Pacific region.

16. In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, the Centre organized the sixteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, on 16 and 17 November 2017. Over 60 representatives from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, policy institutes and academia participated in the Conference.

17. The four sessions of the Conference addressed: (a) regional and global developments in disarmament and non-proliferation; (b) technological advances and their challenges with respect to peace and security; (c) strengthening chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials verification and control; and (d) pathways for the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Participants discussed a range of dual-use technological advances that could pose challenges to peace and security, including artificial intelligence, lethal autonomous weapon systems, cyberspace, 3D printing and armed unmanned aerial vehicles. Experts also broadened the discussion by looking at the possibility of applying new technologies for the verification and control of biological and nuclear weapons programmes. The importance of developing trust among stakeholders was

emphasized in the discussions, including regarding pathways towards the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

18. In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and with the support of the Prefecture and City of Hiroshima, the Regional Centre organized the twenty-seventh United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Hiroshima on 29 and 30 November 2017, on the theme "Towards realizing a world free of nuclear weapons: paving the way to achieve the common goal". The Conference brought together over 80 representatives from Governments, as well as experts from research institutes, academia and non-governmental and civil society organizations, to reflect on the prospects for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The discussion took into account the recent adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and current challenges to security at both the global and regional levels. Participants exchanged views on critical and emerging issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and priorities and challenges with respect to the 2020 Review Cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Furthermore, they discussed the urgent need for in-depth dialogue aimed at building consensus among Member States on the complementary and mutually reinforcing nature of the two treaties and at reviewing the role of deterrence policy in ensuring global strategic security. The Conference highlighted the important role played by civil society and academic institutions in promoting education about peace and nuclear disarmament and in widely disseminating testimonies of atomic bomb survivors, the hibakusha, around the world. In addition, the Regional Centre and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) office in Hiroshima co-organized a screening on 28 November of the documentary film *Paper Lanterns* on the margins of the Conference.

19. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Geneva Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, organized a workshop for Asian States, with the participation of members of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. The workshop, held in Bangkok on 27 and 28 March 2018, served to facilitate dialogue among Asian States on the implications of a future treaty, develop a better understanding of the issue and discuss the relationship of such a treaty with existing global and regional instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It also served as a forum for interaction among members of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group and for knowledge- and information-sharing on issues relevant to the banning of production of fissile material. The project was funded by the Government of Canada.

C. Partnership, outreach and advocacy

20. The Regional Centre continued its efforts to enhance partnerships with major stakeholders in the region, including Member States, subregional organizations, other United Nations entities and civil society, through concerted outreach and information activities, joint initiatives and collaborative projects. In this context, the Centre, inter alia, strengthened its partnerships with ASEAN, the European Union, OSCE and the Pacific Islands Forum through the exchange of information, invitations to one another's events, and joint projects. In addition, the Regional Centre actively participated in and substantively contributed to the events described below.

21. The Regional Centre participated in the national workshop on the theme "Countering the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction", organized by UNODC in Nepal in September 2017. The Centre contributed with a presentation on obligations stemming from Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and on areas of cooperation between the Centre and the Government of Nepal to strengthen national capacity to implement the resolution.

22. The Regional Centre also contributed substantively to the Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Training Programme of UNITAR. The Programme was tailored for diplomats and representatives of ministries of defence of ASEAN member States to enhance understanding of the current state of the nuclear disarmament debate, raise awareness on regional and global experience on confidence-building measures, including those recommended by the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and enhance beneficiaries' skills to advance regional discourse regarding disarmament and non-proliferation.

23. Furthermore, in January and February 2018, the Centre engaged in education and advocacy activities focused on peace and disarmament by delivering presentations to students of Kathmandu's International Lincoln High School and the Nepal Armed Police Forces College on United Nations efforts to maintain peace and security and to promote global agreements aimed at preventing illicit trafficking of small arms.

24. In May 2018, the Centre participated in and contributed to two regional workshops, one in Kathmandu, on promoting the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty in South Asia and on developing national parliamentary action plans on achieving target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the other in Jakarta, on promoting the implementation of relevant arms control instruments in South-East Asia. The Centre delivered presentations on synergies between global arms control agreements and Goals 5 and 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and introduced its regional project on the reduction of gun violence and illicit arms flows from a gender perspective. The workshop in Nepal was organized by the non-governmental organizations Women for Peace and Democracy and Control Arms, and the event in Indonesia by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, in cooperation with the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.

25. The Regional Centre participated in and contributed substantially to the meeting on the theme "Enhancing the women, peace and security agenda in North-East Asia", which was held in Beijing on 24 and 25 May 2018 and was organized by the Department of Political Affairs in cooperation with other United Nations entities operating in the Asia-Pacific region. Through its presentation and remarks in discussions during the meeting, the Regional Centre sought to enhance the agenda for women and peace and security by calling for the following: actively promoting the participation of women in international policy-making processes regarding peace and security matters at the national and international levels; achieving gender parity in legislative and executive branches of power; and strengthening the role of women through peace-and-disarmament education for different sectors of society, with a special emphasis on engaging with the younger generation.

D. Future activities

26. The Regional Centre will continue its work to assist Member States in the region, upon request, in contributing to their national and regional efforts towards arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, and in promoting dialogue, confidence-building and peace-and-disarmament education in the region. The Centre will remain committed to the tasks of providing practical assistance and support to build national capacity for effective implementation of the Programme of Action, of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focused on reducing illicit arms flows and gun violence and empowering women's participation and leadership in decision-making in the area of arms control and disarmament.

III. Financial situation, staffing and administration

A. Financial situation

27. The Regional Centre was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/39 D on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions. In 2017, voluntary contributions to the trust fund for the Centre in the total amount of $253,569 were received from Member States. Information on the status of the trust fund for 2017 is contained in the annex to the present report. The Secretary-General encourages other Member States to consider providing in-kind contributions to the Centre.

28. The Secretary-General expresses his gratitude to the Member States that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre: Australia, China, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation to the Government of Nepal for the long-standing financial and political support it has provided in its capacity as host country to the Regional Centre.

29. The Secretary-General recognizes financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre from Asian and Pacific States as a clear indication of the value that Member States attribute to its expertise and technical assistance, and therefore continues to encourage States in the region to provide such contributions.

30. The Secretary-General wishes to thank all Member States and partners for their generous contributions to and support for the Regional Centre and encourages their ongoing efforts in that regard, which will enable the Centre to continue to provide technical and capacity-building assistance to Member States in the region, at their request, in fulfilment of its mandate. Such financial and in-kind contributions remain essential to ensuring the sustainability of the Centre's operations, core activities and programmes, which benefit Asia and the Pacific.

B. Staffing

31. The regular budget of the United Nations funds the posts of one Senior Political Affairs Officer/Director of the Centre (P-5), one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and one General Service staff member (G-7, Local level).

32. The Secretary-General thanks the host country, Nepal, which funded two additional local General Service staff members through its annual contribution. The Secretary-General also thanks the Governments of Japan and Switzerland for each providing the Centre with one Junior Professional Officer.

IV. Conclusion

33. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre engaged in and provided assistance for a number of arms control and disarmament initiatives and programmes in Asia and the Pacific. Working with Member States and other stakeholders, it thereby continued to fulfil its mandate to provide support, upon request, to Member States.

34. The Centre engaged in outreach and advocacy activities and actively cooperated with partners in the region, including ASEAN and other subregional organizations. Its efforts to strengthen the capacity of States in the region to control conventional arms and to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors remain highly relevant.

35. The Centre plans to expand the scope of its activities to include peace-and-disarmament education, as well as the promotion of the full and effective inclusion and participation of women in decision-making with respect to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, as part of the efforts of the United Nations to further promote peace, security and disarmament in the region and the world. In this regard, the annual conferences held in Japan and the Republic of Korea continue to provide important forums for promoting dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security.

36. The Secretary-General calls upon Member States and other donors to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary financial and in-kind support to enable it to continue to fulfil its mandate effectively in serving the needs of Asia-Pacific Member States in the fields of peace, security and disarmament, in pursuance of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which promotes peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and in compliance with the Secretary-General's new disarmament agenda, entitled "Securing our common future: an agenda for disarmament", as presented in Geneva on 24 May 2018.

Annex

Status of the trust fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for 2017

(United States dollars)

Accumulated surplus, 1 January 2017	**962 386**
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions	253 569[a]
Investment revenue	12 850
Other revenue	3 034
Total revenue and prior year adjustment	**269 453**
Expenses	
Operating expenses	469 652
Total expenses	**469 652**
Surplus/(deficit)	(200 199)
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)	**762 187**

[a] Consists of voluntary contributions from donors as follows: Australia, $22,935; China, $50,000; Germany, $59,390; Japan, $78,244; Republic of Korea, $40,000; Thailand, $3,000.